

gjG House

GHENT, BELGIUM
2015
BLAF ARCHITECTEN

This elegant and minimalist single-family house designed by BLAF Architecten is an experimental project in the body of research addressing the relationship between material, construction and the appearance of brick architecture. The architects' goal is to find new methods for using brick, which had recently become cladding rather than a structural material (due to new energy performance standards). This unfortunate change leads not only to creating many unsustainable buildings with non-reusable waste, but also to limiting visual expression.

gjG House demonstrates how bricks can be effectively re-used and innovatively shaped. The building sits in a wooded plot close to a highway. The architects decided to shape the curving walls to fit in the space between the trees on the site and not to cut them down to accommodate the structure. The rounded shape realized in brick both inside and outside creates a very neutral effect that works perfectly with the surrounding natural environment.

Its curvaceous volume visually reduces the rather massive size of the house and allows it to merge smoothly into its green context. While the brick shell of the house functions structurally autonomously, it also enhances the acoustic comfort of the interiors. In one part of the house the shell spans over three stories with the space divided and linked through steel and timber frame constructions covered in the re-used bricks. In another area there is an open space area. The softened interior surfaces, just like on the outer surface, are enhanced by the regular rhythm of bricks albeit with varying hues.



